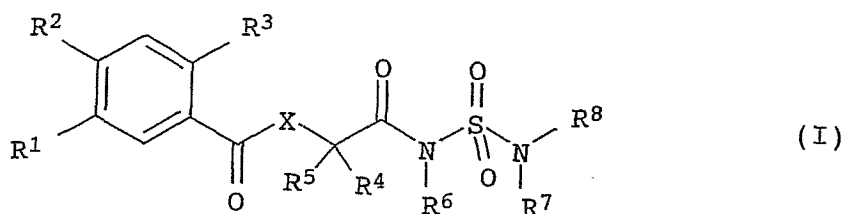


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

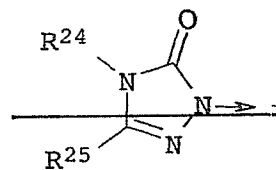
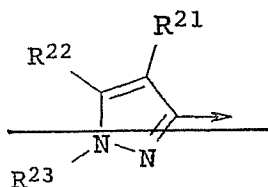
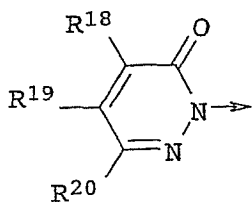
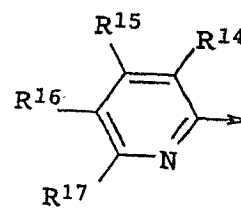
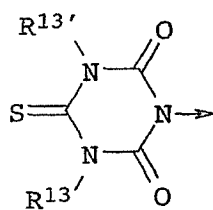
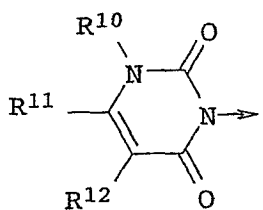
1. (Currently Amended) A 3-heterocyclly-substituted benzoic acid derivative compound of the formula I

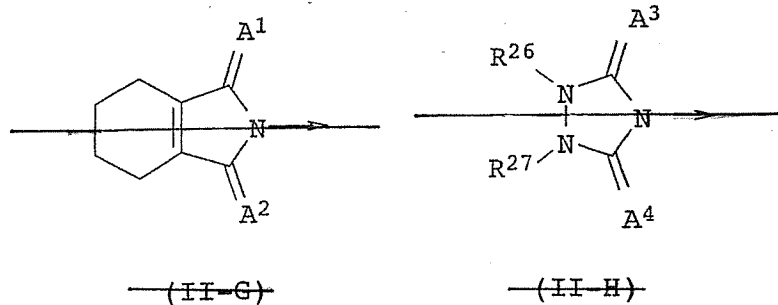


wherein:

X is oxygen or NR⁹,

R¹ is a heterocyclic radical of the formulae II-A to II-H,





R² is hydrogen or halogen,

R³ is halogen or cyano,

R⁴, R⁵ independently of one another are hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl
or C₁-C₄-alkoxy, or R⁴ and R⁵ together are a group =CH₂,

R⁶ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-alkoxy,

R⁷, R⁸ independently of one another are hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl,

C₃-C₆-alkenyl, C₃-C₆-alkynyl, C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

C₁-C₄-alkoxy-C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylthio-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

C₁-C₄-alkylsulfinyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

cyano-C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-alkoxycarbonyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

amino-C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylamino-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

di(C₁-C₄-alkyl) amino-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

aminocarbonyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

(C₁-C₄-alkylamino)carbonyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

di(C₁-C₄-alkyl)aminocarbonyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl,

phenyl or C₁-C₄-alkylphenyl or

R⁷ and R⁸ together with the nitrogen atom to which they are

attached form a saturated or unsaturated 3-, 4-, 5-, 6
or 7-membered nitrogen heterocycle which may optionally
contain one or two further heteroatoms selected from the
group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen as ring
members, which may contain 1 or 2 carbonyl and/or
thiocarbonyl groups as ring members and/or which may be
substituted by one, two or three substituents selected
from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R⁹ is hydrogen, hydroxyl, C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-alkoxy, phenyl,
phenyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₃-C₆-alkenyl or C₃-C₆-alkynyl,

R¹⁰ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino,

R¹¹ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R¹² is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹³, R^{13'} independently of one another are hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁴ is halogen,

R¹⁵ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁶ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylthio,
C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyloxy,

R¹⁷ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁸ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino,

R¹⁹ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylthio or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl,

R²⁰ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R²¹ is hydrogen, halogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R²² is C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-haloalkoxy, C₁-C₄-alkylthio or
C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl,

R²³ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

or

R²² and R²³ together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or

7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which may contain a heteroatom
selected from the group consisting of oxygen and nitrogen as a ring-forming
atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected
from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R²⁴ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R²⁵ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

or

R²⁴ and R²⁵ together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or

7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen
atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three
radicals selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R²⁶ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R²⁷ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

or

R^{26} and R^{27} together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected from the group consisting of C1-C4-alkyl and halogen, A^1 , A^2 , A^3 , A^4 are each independently of one another oxygen or sulfur, or an agriculturally useful salt thereof.

2. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^2 is 10 fluorine, chlorine or hydrogen.

3. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^3 is chlorine or cyano.

4. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where X is oxygen.

5. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^6 is hydrogen.

6. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-A in which R^{10} is C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino, R^{11} is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl and R^{12} is hydrogen.

7. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~ compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-B in which R^{13} and $R^{13'}$ are each independently of one another C_1 - C_4 -alkyl.

8. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~ compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-C in which R^{14} is fluorine or chlorine, R^{15} is hydrogen and R^{16} is C_1 - C_4 -haloalkyl, C_1 - C_4 -alkylsulfonyl or C_1 - C_4 -alkylsulfonyloxy.

9. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~ compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-D in which R^{18} is hydrogen, methyl or amino, R^{19} is C_1 - C_4 -haloalkyl or C_1 - C_4 -alkylsulfonyl and R^{20} is hydrogen.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~ compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-H in which R^{26} and R^{27} are each

independently of one another C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl or R²⁶ together with R²⁷ are a chain of the formulae -CH₂-O-(CH₂)₂- or -(CH₂)₄-.

14. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where

R² is hydrogen, chlorine or fluorine,

R³ is chlorine or cyano,

R⁶ is hydrogen and

X is oxygen.

15. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound as claimed in claim 1 where R⁴ or R⁵ is hydrogen and the other radical R⁴ or R⁵ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or R⁴, R⁵ are each methyl.

16. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

17. (Currently Amended) A composition for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising an effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as

claimed in claim 1 which acts as a desiccant/defoliant and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation, which comprises allowing a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants, their habitat and/or on seed.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, which comprises allowing an amount which is effective as a desiccant/defoliant of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid ~~derivative~~compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation or for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising applying to plants, the habitat of the plants or seeds of the plants an agriculturally effective amount of a ~~derivative~~compound or salt of claim 1.